

THE FORT JAMESON NOONI

233 are out at pasture all day under the charge of herdboys, and may be brought in for milking in the early afternoon, later returning to the bush. Alternatively they are not milked until they come in just before sunset to be put in their byres for the night. These activities are 857 organized by the herdboys, who range from five up to about twelve 233 years in age. All the boys in a village take part in herding, whether or not their parents own cattle. A man keeps all his cattle in the village in one byre, although he may also have cattle in other villages under the care of relatives. The boys attach themselves to definite byres, and the senior boy of the group becomes responsible for all the cattle in the byre. He sees that the cattle do not stray into gardens during the season when they may damage the crops, and he checks that all the [868] cattle return at night. He instructs the younger boys in the art of milking, and supervises the allocation of the milk, which is his perquisite. Cattle from all the byres in the village may be herded together. After the harvest the cattle are often left to wander where they please and the boys occupy themselves in the village or hunting for rabbits until it is time to round up the cattle for milking.

628 There are no definite pastures associated with one village rather 233 than with another, so that the herds from one village may come into 857 contact with those from another. This may lead to fighting between the two groups of herdboys, and also, if it can be managed, between [541] the bulls of the villages. Boys take pride in the fighting ability of their bulls, and sometimes seek out other herds in order to demonstrate the superior strength of themselves and their animals. It is significant that informants referred always to fights between bulls of different villages, and not of fights between bulls from different byres in the same village, although these do occur.

233 In the past, herding was carried out by older boys, and life as a herd- 833 boy was terminated only by enrolment into a regiment. Inter-village 857 fighting went on partly to demonstrate that the boys concerned were now strong enough to join the army. At the present time boys of twelve and younger are employed on tobacco farms, and many attend school. Some cattle owners have to pay boys to come from other villages to herd their cattle as there are no boys available in the village itself, while others obtain the services of young girls.

Inter-village Relationships

628 Villages are grouped together into counties, under a minor chief, 631 and in some counties there are recognized subdivisions that I shall